Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended)   A method for facilitating online commerce comprising the steps of:

~~accessing or~~ facilitating a web page displaying an item or service available for purchase;

generating, transmitting, or receiving a request from a consumer to purchase said item or service;

routing said request over a transmission control protocol and Internet protocol communications protocol (TCP/IP) network and a signaling system 7 (SS7) network; and

facilitating said purchase to be charged to a telecommunications account via said SS7 network,

wherein said telecommunications account is not ~~necessarily~~ associated with a communications line by which said consumer has originated said request.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of authorizing said request to determine if said purchase is authorized, wherein said purchase is charged only if said purchase is authorized.

3. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein said step of authorizing comprises the steps of:

contacting a server servicing said telecommunications account,

querying a subscriber database to determine if said consumer subscribes to a telephone account billing service, and

generating a response comprising an indication of positive or negative authorization based on said query.

4. (Original) The method of claim 3, further comprising the step of determining whether an amount of said purchase is below a predetermined credit limit for said consumer.

5. (Currently Amended)　　The method of claim 1, wherein a value of said item or service is ~~substantially~~ equal to a micropayment amount.

6. (Original)　The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of remitting a portion of a full amount of said purchase to a merchant, wherein said portion is less than said full amount.

7. (Currently Amended)　　The method of claim 6, further comprising the step of remitting an amount to a <u>telephone or telecommunications company</u> ~~TELCO~~ servicing said telecommunications account equal to a portion of a difference between said full amount and said portion remitted to said merchant.

8. (Currently Amended)　　The method of claim 1, wherein said step of facilitating comprises the step of[[:]] communicating with a <u>telephone or telecommunications company</u> ~~TELCO~~ network via a <u>signaling system 7</u> ~~SS7~~ communications protocol.

9. (Canceled)

10. (Canceled)

11. (Currently Amended)　　A transaction system comprising:

[[an]] <u>a</u> <u>signaling system 7 (SS7</u><u>)</u> communication server, wherein said communications server comprises:

a receiver for receiving information associated with a request to purchase an item or service offered online; and

a processor to facilitate said purchase to be charged to a telecommunications account, and

an authentication server for authenticating said telecommunications account, <u>and</u>

<u>a communications bridge to convert a transmission control protocol and Internet protocol communications protocol (TCP) message to a SS7 protocol message and vice versa.</u>

12. (Original) The transaction system of claim 11, wherein said authentication server validates an amount of the purchase against a predefined credit limit.

13. (Currently Amended)   The transaction system of claim 11, wherein said signaling system 7 SS7 communications server receives said request via a said transmission control protocol and Internet protocol communications protocol and a transaction capabilities application part channel protocol.

14. (Currently Amended)   The transaction system of claim 11, wherein said signaling system 7 SS7 communications server is connected to a telephone network.

15. (Currently Amended)   A method comprising the steps of:

activating a session to facilitate purchasing of items and/or services offered via a public and private communications network; and

facilitating at least one purchase to be charged to a telecommunications account during said session,

wherein said public and private communications network utilizes a transmission control protocol and Internet protocol communications protocol (TCP/IP) and a transaction capabilities application part channel protocol (TCAP).

16. (New) A method for facilitating online commerce comprising the steps of:

facilitating a web page displaying an item or service available for purchase;

transmitting or receiving a short messaging system (SMS) message comprising a request from a consumer to purchase said item or service;

routing said request over a SMS network and signaling system 7 (SS7) network via a SMS-SS7 gateway; and

facilitating said purchase to be charged to a telecommunications account via said SS7 network.